

b) adding said composition to food in an amount to provide to said mammal a therapeutically effective amount of iron; and

c) administering the food and micro-encapsulated iron granules to said mammal directly after adding said composition to said food;

wherein the mammal consumes a therapeutically effective amount of iron as micro-encapsulated iron granules.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of a semi-solid or pureed food and a milk-based food product.

38. The method of claim 36, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 10-17mg of elemental iron.

39. The method of claim 36, wherein the composition additionally comprises ascorbic acid.

40. The method of claim 36, wherein the composition comprises microencapsulated iron granules in an excipient that is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.

41. The method of claim 36, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 40-80 mg of elemental iron.

42. The method of claim 36, wherein: the iron granules are encapsulated with a coating selected from the group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, ethyl cellulose, hydrogenated soy bean oil and mixtures thereof; and said composition further comprises an excipient that is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.

43. A method for preventing iron deficiency anemia in a mammal comprising the steps of:

a) adding to food, contents from packaging material of an article of manufacture that consists essentially of:

i) a packaging material; and

ii) a composition that consists essentially of an admixture of a single daily dose of a therapeutically effective amount of elemental iron as microencapsulated iron granules in combination with an excipient, and optionally, one or more of a bioavailable form of an additional micronutrient; and,

b) administering said food and said composition to said mammal directly after adding said composition to said food;

wherein the mammal consumes a therapeutically effective amount of iron as micro-encapsulated iron granules.

44. The method of claim 43, wherein the packaging material is in the form of a sachet.

45. The method of claim 43, wherein the food is selected from the group consisting of a semi-solid or pureed food and a milk- based food product.

46. The method of claim 43, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 10-17mg of elemental iron.

47. The method of claim 43, wherein the composition additionally comprises ascorbic acid.

48. The method of claim 43, wherein the composition comprises microencapsulated iron granules in an excipient that is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.

49. The method of claim 43, wherein said therapeutically effective amount comprises about 40-80 mg of elemental iron.

- 50.** The method of claim 43, wherein: the iron granules are encapsulated with a coating selected from the group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, ethyl cellulose, hydrogenated soy bean oil and mixtures thereof; and said composition further comprises an excipient that is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.
- 51.** An article of manufacture consisting essentially of:
- a) a packaging material; and
  - b) a composition contained within said packaging material, wherein the composition consists essentially of an admixture of microencapsulated iron granules in combination with an excipient, and optionally, one or more of a bioavailable form of an additional micronutrient.
- 52.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the composition consists essentially of: an admixture of microencapsulated iron granules in combination with the excipient, and one or more of a bioavailable form of a compound selected from zinc, vitamin A, iodine and ascorbic acid.
- 53.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the excipient is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.
- 54.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the iron granules are no more than about 850 microns in diameter.
- 55.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the iron granules are encapsulated with a coating, said coating being prepared from a compound selected from the group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, ethyl cellulose, hydrogenated soy bean oil and mixtures thereof.
- 56.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the iron granules are encapsulated with a coating selected from the group consisting of monoglycerides, diglycerides, ethyl

cellulose, hydrogenated soy bean oil and mixtures thereof; and the excipient is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.

**57.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the composition contains one or more of a bioavailable form of an additional micronutrient.

**58.** An article of manufacture of claim 51, wherein the composition contains one or more of a bioavailable form of a compound selected from zinc, vitamin A, iodine and ascorbic acid.

**59.** An article of manufacture consisting essentially of:

- a) a packaging material; and
- b) a composition contained within said packaging material, wherein said composition consists essentially of an admixture of a single daily dose of a therapeutically effective amount of elemental iron as microencapsulated iron granules in combination with an excipient, and optionally, one or more of a bioavailable form of an additional micronutrient.

**60.** An article of manufacture of claim 59 wherein the packaging material is in the form of a sachet.

**61.** An article of manufacture of claim 59, wherein the composition consists essentially of: an admixture of microencapsulated iron granules in combination with the excipient, and one or more of a bioavailable form of a compound selected from zinc, vitamin A, iodine and ascorbic acid.

**62.** An article of manufacture of claim 59, wherein the excipient is an edible oil in hydrogenated form.